



Relationships and Sex Education policy

APPROVED BY:	Board of Governors
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1. Aims

The aims of relationships, sex and health education (RSE) at Rigby Hall school are to:

- sensitively meet the needs of our pupils in partnership with parent carers.
- enable pupils to make responsible and informed decisions about their lives.
- prepare pupils to cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing up.
- provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- provide a consistent standard of relationship, sex and health education across the school.
- help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- promote responsible behaviour.
- create a positive culture of communication around issues of relationships and sexuality.
- prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- ensure the safety of all of our pupils in an increasingly complex world where they are exposed to lots of conflicting messages about body image and relationships.

This supports our ethos in ensuring our pupils are treated as individuals and supported to develop independence and life skills as they move through the school that will enable them to make informed choices and behave responsibly as they grow.

High quality relationship and sex education (RSE) is every child's right, no matter what their level of need or ability.

At Rigby Hall school, RSE is taught through our PSHE curriculum and we aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens.

2. Statutory requirements

From September 2020, relationships, sex and health education became statutory in all schools in England; Relationships and health education became statutory in all primary schools and relationships, sex and health education became statutory in all secondary schools in England. (www.fpa.org.uk)

'In special schools (and for some SEND pupils in mainstream schools) there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages. As with all teaching for these subjects, schools should ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.' (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education - DFE 2019)

The Relationships, Sex and Health Education 2020 curriculum is designed to:

- Help all children grow up healthy, happy and safe.

- Give all children the knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships.
- Support all children to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain.
- Prepare all children for a successful adult lives.

3. Definitions

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is about encouraging pupils to be able to make informed choices.

Relationships education is defined as teaching about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to respectful friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults, including online.

Sex education is teaching of issues relating to human sexuality, including emotional relations and responsibilities, human sexual anatomy, sexual activity, sexual reproduction, age of consent, reproductive health, reproductive rights, safe sex and birth control.

RSE is not the promotion of sexual activity.

4. Curriculum

At Rigby Hall school we will ensure that RSE shall be thread into other subject areas to ensure that messages are reaffirmed and that conversations on the topics become normal, as advised by the statutory guidance. This will help to embed the learning for those pupils who may not understand through one context.

When planning and delivering RSE we will ensure the teaching is;

- Sensitive
- age-appropriate
- developmentally appropriate
- delivered with reference to the law

Our RSE curriculum is embedded within our PSHE curriculum and is set out on the school website <https://www.rigbyhallschool.com/curriculum-overview/phse-overview> However, this will be adapted when/where necessary. This may be subject to modification with changing cohorts of pupils with differing needs and abilities and also issues that may arise throughout the school year.

5. Delivery of RSHE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Staff will consistently use the correct terminology for genitalia throughout school. Children should be taught the standard terms for all of their body parts, including the ones some adults are nervous about naming.

When children know and are comfortable using the correct terminology for their private body parts—penis, scrotum, vagina— we can ensure that we know they are equipped to communicate effectively and in turn stay safe and protected.

To ensure consistency, we have asked parent carers to support with this.

Our RSE programme will be delivered in an age appropriate and sensitive manner by class teachers. Teaching is normally taught in mixed gender groups, though some content may be covered in single sex groups e.g. menstrual hygiene.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships (also taught through the Computing Curriculum)
- Being safe (also taught through the Computing Curriculum)

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media (also taught through the Computing Curriculum)
- Being safe (also taught through the Computing Curriculum)
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

At Rigby Hall, we aim to provide a learning environment where pupils feel safe and relaxed, and where they feel confident to engage in discussions around potentially sensitive subjects and themes.

Ground rules in class and across the school are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter and teaching RSE. Clear ground rules are established in partnership with pupils (this is

built into both primary and secondary long term plans at the beginning of each term) and reinforced at the start of each PSHE lesson.

- Listen politely to each other
- Everyone gets a turn to speak, if they want to
- Everyone has a right not to speak
- Everyone's contribution is respected
- We don't ask or have to answer any personal questions
- We use anatomically correct language when we have learnt it

Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole-class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
 - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

6. Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers

We **will not**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions

- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

7. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body

The governing body of the school will approve this policy and also hold the Headteacher of the school accountable for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 7). The Headteacher will also ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, identified by subject lead so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

Subject lead

The subject lead is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and is monitored by the senior leadership team who will manage requests to withdraw pupils from the non-statutory components of the RSE curriculum.

The subject lead will monitor this policy on a regular basis and report to the Headteacher and governors on the effectiveness of the policy.

Staff

Teaching staff (and some teaching assistants) are responsible for delivering RSE to pupils in a sensitive manner and modelling positive attitudes to RSE.

Staff have responsibility in responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE and discuss any concerns with subject leads.

Staff will monitor the progress pupils make in RSE and feedback any concerns or issues in delivery of the content to the subject leads.

Teachers will reply to, and answer, pupil's questions sensitively and openly. They will ensure that balanced information is provided which will take into account the different faiths and cultural beliefs and avoid any negative impressions. Teachers will need to answer questions that may arise through the direct teaching of sex education, as well as those that may be asked at other times. All questions will be handled sensitively and set within a general context.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the subject lead. Questions which teachers feel uncertain about answering should be discussed with a senior member of staff and answered at a later date.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and when discussing issues, to show respect and sensitivity to others,

We recognise that due to the difficulties and SEND of our pupils, some may find participation of some aspects of RSE difficult to engage in.

Parent carers

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's relationship and sex education lies with parent carers. Staff at Rigby Hall seek to build positive and supportive relationships with parent carers of pupils at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

In promoting this aim, we:

- Will carry out our statutory duty to consult with parent carers and governors on the contents of this policy
- Inform parent carers about the school's RSE policy and practice; this includes informing parent carers by letter or email before beginning to teach a unit of RSE
- Answer any questions that parent carers may have about the RSE of their child
- Take seriously any issues that parent carers may raise with teachers or governors about the RSE policy or the arrangements for delivering RSE in the school
- Support parent carers in understanding the importance of this aspect of their child's education
- Acknowledge parent carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE
- Keep a register of any pupils who are removed from RSE lessons and distributed to all teachers involved.

8. Parent carers right to withdraw

As previously stated the RSE curriculum consists of both statutory and non-statutory elements:

- Parent carers do not have the right to withdraw primary age children from relationships education.
- Parent carers do have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE. (secondary age pupils)
- Parent carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from statutory relationships education, health education or the science curriculum.
- Parent carers cannot withdraw their child from any part of the relationships and health education aspects of the RSE curriculum. It is important for ALL children to be taught the content on such essential matters like friendships and keeping safe.

Any parent carers expressing a want to withdraw their children are firstly invited to speak to the class teacher who will refer directly to the subject lead. The subject lead will explore and

discuss the concern with the parent carer and the possibility of adjusting the programme or approach and will discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. If the parent carer still wishes to withdraw the child, requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record and added to 'My Concern'. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parent carers and take appropriate action. Once a pupil has been withdrawn they cannot take part in sex education until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

9. Confidentiality

Staff must conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner however, if a pupil makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as outlined in the schools Safeguarding Policy.

Staff must respond in a similar way if a pupil indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse or exploitation. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw these to the attention of the designated safeguarding lead for child protection or the Headteacher as a matter of urgency. Disclosure of female genital mutilation must be reported to the police (either by the teacher to whom it is disclosed or by the DSL).

Although pupils are encouraged to be open and honest during RSHE lessons, confidentiality must never be guaranteed. If a safeguarding matter arises during a lesson pupils are firstly informed and then supported by a designated teacher / safeguarding lead throughout the process.

10. Training

Staff at Rigby Hall school are regularly trained on the delivery of high quality and sensitive RSE and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The school will also invite visitors into school to deliver certain aspects of RSE such as school nurse and sexual health professionals.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the PSHE subject lead, through, for example, learning walks and lesson observations, monitoring and analysis of termly data.

This information will then be monitored regularly through subject discussions with the senior leadership team and shared with governors.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored regularly by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems and the use of Solar.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by our governing body annually.